



Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH
Director

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TTY: 711
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April 13, 2021

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chairman
House Committee on Finance
State House
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H 6122 - AN ACT MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE STATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022 - ARTICLE 16- RELATING TO HOUSING

Dear Chairman Abney:

I am writing in support of H 6122, an act making appropriations for the support of the state for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 - Article 16 - Relating to Housing. Article 16 would establish:

- A permanent funding stream for affordable and workforce housing through a new restricted receipt fund to encourage housing production and municipal housing development partnerships; and
- Comprehensive governance reforms to improve statewide coordination.

Specifically, the Governor recommends modifying the real estate conveyance tax to add a new bracket for properties valued more than \$700,000. This revenue will be deposited into a new restricted receipt account called the Housing Production Fund. Additionally, the budget proposes to reallocate 27% of the State's share of the realty transfer tax to the Housing Production Fund. These two initiatives will create a dedicated funding stream to support new affordable and workforce housing in the state.

The Governor also recommends a comprehensive strategy to modernize outdated State housing governance. This includes reforming the Housing Resources Commission, establishing a new Housing Resources Coordinating Committee, and codifying the role of the Office of Housing and Community Development to improve statewide coordination of housing policy, planning, and financing.

Housing is well understood to be an important social determinant of physical and mental health and well-being. Affordable housing alleviates crowding and makes more household resources available to pay for healthcare and healthy food, which leads to better health outcomes. High-quality housing limits exposure to environmental toxins that impact health. Stable and affordable housing also supports mental health by limiting stressors related to financial burden or frequent moves, or by offering an escape from an abusive home environment. Affordable housing can also serve as a platform for providing supportive services to improve the health of vulnerable

populations, including older adults, people with disabilities, and homeless individuals and families. Safe, decent, and affordable housing in neighborhoods of opportunity can also offer health benefits to low-income households.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicole", followed by a long horizontal line and the word "for" written below it.

Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH
Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House